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Governor Doyle Orders Review of Wisconsin's Preparedness Plans

Governor Jim Doyle today directed Major General Al Wilkening to conduct a review of Wisconsin's preparedness plans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. General Wilkening is Adjutant General of Wisconsin and Wisconsin's Homeland Security Advisor.

"I am proud of the way Wisconsin has responded to Hurricane Katrina, from the Wisconsin National Guard to the Red Cross and all the volunteers who are caring for evacuees here in our state," Governor Doyle said. "But we also need to learn everything we can from this disaster, and the response of local, state, and federal officials."

Governor Doyle directed General Wilkening to conduct a thorough review of Wisconsin's preparedness plans and report back to him in three weeks. The report should address:

- What lessons Wisconsin can learn from the experience of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama,
- If Wisconsin's emergency plans are adequate for dealing with all hazards, whether man-made or natural disasters,
- What additional steps Wisconsin should take to prepare itself for a major tragedy.

"Some of the specific areas I'd like this report to address are: whether we have adequate evacuation plans in place for major cities; how we would evacuate nursing homes, hospitals, and our most vulnerable citizens; and how we would coordinate if other state National Guard units were deployed to Wisconsin," Governor Doyle said. "We need to be sure that our communications systems are in place to coordinate between the local, state, and federal level. And we need to make sure we have adequate numbers of first responders and trained volunteer responders in the event of major disaster."

Governor Doyle said that Wisconsin Emergency Management has shown great coordination over the past year in their work to respond to the recent tornadoes in Dane, Richland, and Vernon Counties, the fire in Adams County, and most recently, Hurricane Katrina.

"Wisconsin Emergency Management's work has been remarkable," Governor Doyle said. "But if we have learned one thing from Hurricane Katrina, it is that we can never be satisfied with our preparedness plans and that we can always improve upon our ability to respond."